



Montana High School Association Executive Board

Rules and Regulations

Section (4) CONCUSSIONS/SERIOUS INJURY REQUIREMENTS AND RETURN TO PLAY

A. Return to Play:

In accordance with the Dylan Steigers Protection of Youth Athletes Act, an athletic trainer, coach, or official shall remove a youth athlete from participation in any organized youth athletic activity at the time the youth exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion. The youth cannot return to play until he/she is evaluated by a licensed health care professional and receives written clearance to return to play from the licensed health care professional.

In addition, the MHSA also requires that an athletic trainer, coach, or official shall remove a student-athlete from participation in any MHSA activity at the time the student exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a serious injury. The student cannot return to play until he/she is evaluated by a licensed health care professional and is cleared by a licensed health care professional, although written clearance is not required for serious injury other than concussion unless mandated by the local school district.

B. MHSA Policy in Accordance with State Legislation:

Each (high) school district in this state offering organized youth athletic activities shall adopt policies and procedures to inform athletic trainers, coaches, officials, youth athletes and parents or guardians of the nature and risk of brain injuries, including the effects of continuing to play after a concussion.

C. Coach Education/Athletic Trainer Education and Awareness:

Each MHSA coach (head, assistant and school-approved volunteer and including cheer coaches) and athletic trainer must complete the "NFHS Concussion in Sports – What You Need to Know" course each year. The course is available at www.nfhslearn.com. The course must be viewed before the coach has contact with student-athletes in his/her respective sport and viewed after May 1st for the subsequent year. The school should restrict any coach from coaching until the course is completed or the school district is in violation of Montana State Law.

D. Student-Athletes' and Parents' Awareness and Notification:

Schools shall distribute to each student-athlete and his/her parents or legal guardians the information provided to the schools by the MHSA (acknowledgement form with required signatures, parent information, athlete information and available resources) before the student participates in an MHSA sport. The student-athlete and parents/legal guardians must sign the acknowledgement form on the front page after verifying they have read and understand the information regarding concussions. The acknowledgement form must be retained on file by each school. The information with signature sheet cannot be distributed and completed until after May 1st for the next school year. The student and parents/guardians only have to complete the information once per year and it must be completed before the student practices or participates for the first time in a given school year.

E. Officials Education and Awareness:

Each MOA or non-MOA official who works MHSA contests must take the "NFHS Concussion in Sports – What You Need to Know" course each year. That course must be taken after June 1st for the subsequent school year and must be completed before officiating scrimmages or contests. Schools using non-MOA officials for sub varsity games must verify those officials have completed training.